



# COLORADO RIVER

## BOATING TRAIL GUIDE

BLYTHE TO IMPERIAL DAM

# The Colorado River

## Canoeing from Blythe to Imperial Dam

The 1974 Recreational Trails Act recognized the need to provide for increased recreational boating opportunities on California's rivers by designating specific rivers for study as boating trails. The California Department of Boating and Waterways has published this Boating Trail Guide, with the cooperation of other agencies, to provide basic information which will assist you in planning a safe and enjoyable trip.

Lands along the shoreline are owned and managed by various entities, public and private. When facing downstream, usually the land to the river-right is in California, while Arizona is at river-left. However, due to levee work and the river's tendency to change course, some portions of Arizona are now on both sides of the river.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services manages the Cibola and Imperial National Wildlife Refuges, primarily for migratory waterfowl. Overnight camping is prohibited on these refuges. The remainder of federal property is managed by BLM's Yuma District Office for a variety of land uses. Picacho State Recreation Area, which is also adjacent to the river, is managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

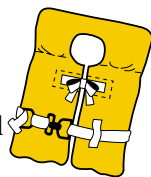
The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is responsible for controlling water flows. For information regarding expected flows, contact the bureau in Yuma or Boulder City (see back cover for contact information).

Fishing is very good on the river and in some backwater areas. Regulations and information are available from the California Department of Fish and Game, (909) 597-9823, and the Arizona Department of Game and Fish, (602) 942-3000.

## Safe Boating and River Hints

**River Canoeing...** Since the river current is swift and therefore potentially dangerous, river travel should be a team effort involving at least three boats. Never boat alone. For more information on canoeing safety, see the Department of Boating and Waterways pamphlet *Safe Boating Hints for Paddle Craft*, viewable on our web site at [www.dbw.ca.gov](http://www.dbw.ca.gov).

**Life Jackets...** U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets are required by federal and state law to be carried for each person aboard a canoe, kayak, inflatable raft or other type of watercraft. Non-swimmers and children should wear a life jacket at all times. By law, children under the age of 12 must wear a life jacket on a vessel of 26 feet or less, while under way.



**Hazards...** Be alert for submerged hazards such as sandbars, rocks, snags, and other river debris. Visibility of hazards varies with water level

fluctuations.

**Powerboats...** Canoeists will be sharing the river with numerous powerboats. The wakes created by powerboats can be quite large. To prevent possible swamping, canoeists

should enter these wakes at a slight angle to the wave.



**Water...** Dehydration is a danger. Potable water, available at only a few locations, should be carried, at least a gallon per person per day. To make river water potable, boil it for 10-20 minutes, or use halizone tablets.

**Caution...** Late Spring, summer and early fall air temperatures usually exceed 100°F. Boaters should plan their trips carefully to guard against exposure to extreme temperatures. Between November and June, the desert is cold at night, with drops in temperature of 30-40 degrees.

**Parking...** Boaters should check with the managers of marinas or camping areas for preferable parking locations.

**Boat Ramps...** Do not block access to boat ramps. Canoes should be beached at either the upstream or downstream side of the boat ramps to permit launching and retrieval without congestion.

**Pitch In...** The beauty of this river

can best be preserved by its users. Pitch in and do your part to keep it clean. Take waterproof trashbags along and boat out what you boat in.



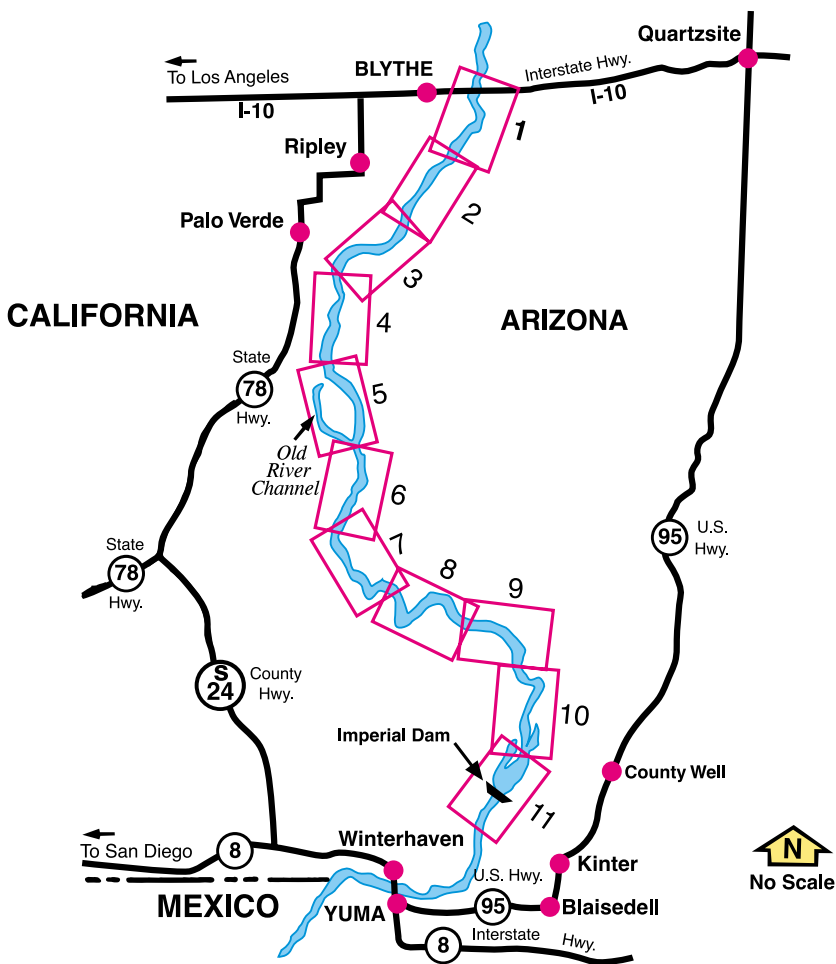
**Lights...** After sunset, a light which shines 360 degrees and is visible for two miles must be displayed by manually propelled craft. Powerboats must display all lights required by state and federal law. (See the Department pamphlet *The ABCs of California Boating Law*.)

**Float Plan...** Boaters should leave word with a responsible person regarding their route and expected date of return.









## Guide Maps

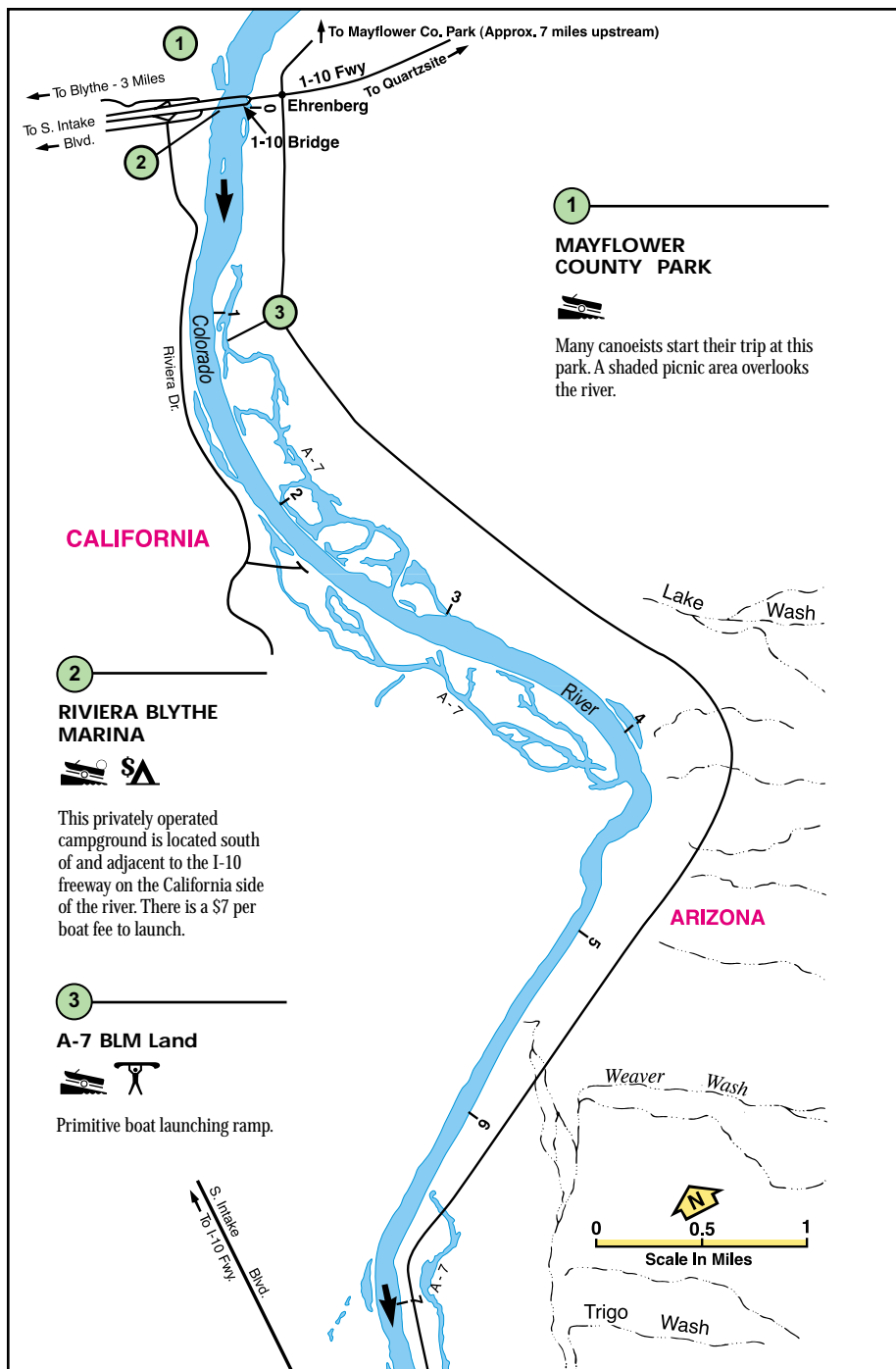
From Blythe to Imperial Dam, the river flows approximately 76 miles. Although the run does not have any whitewater rapids, the current is fast moving and averages 5 mph. Boat trips longer than 76 miles may be planned by entering the river upstream from Blythe or by continuing downstream from Imperial Dam. However, shorter trips are also possible. The following maps will illustrate some of the launch areas and take-out points, as well as some of the navigable side channels. The river mileage indicated on the guide maps is from the I-10 Bridge

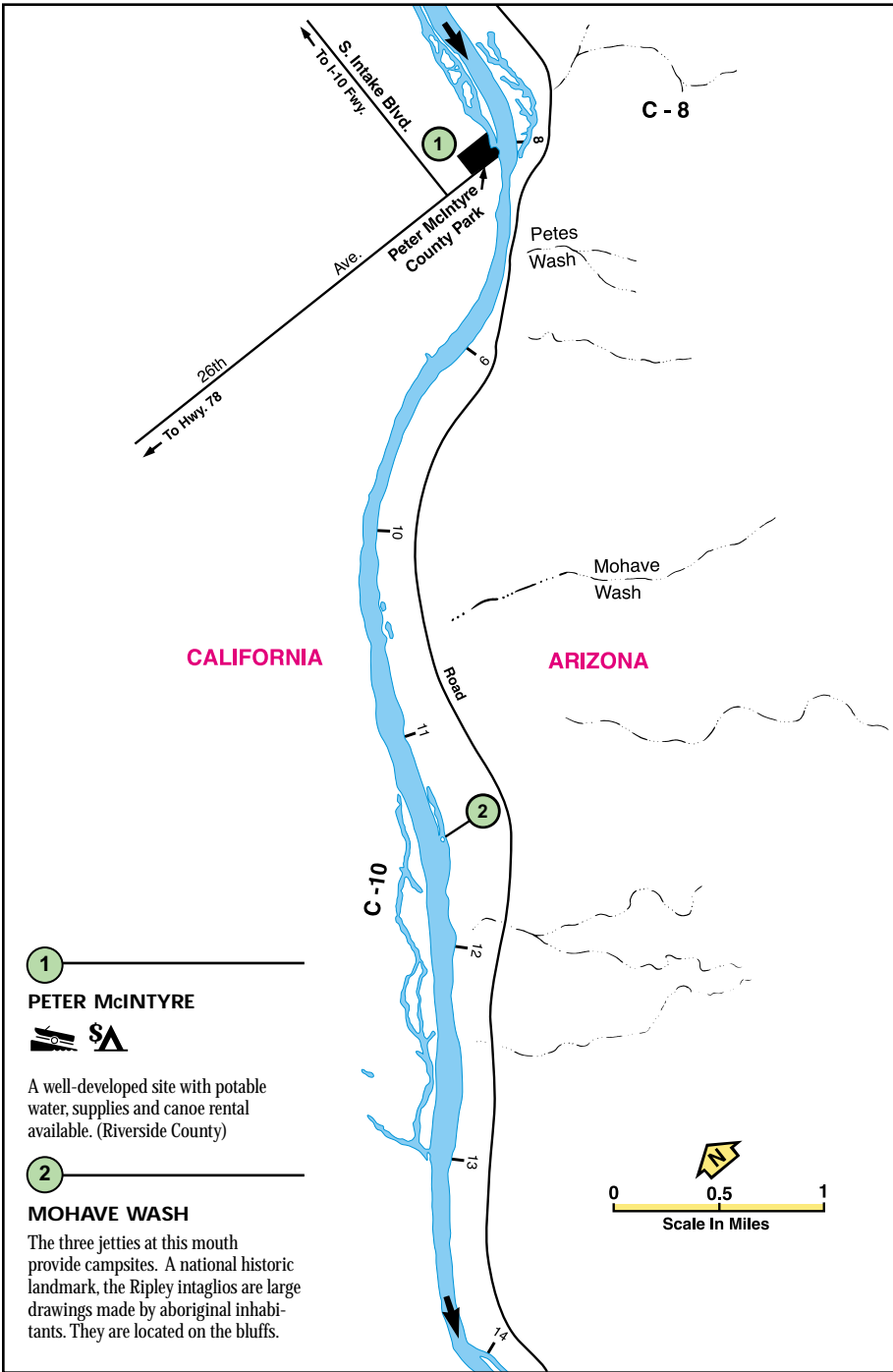




## Legend

- |   |                                |   |                       |
|---|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
|  | River Flow                     |  | Portage               |
|  | River Mile                     |  | Boat Launch Ramp      |
|  | Wildlife Refuge Boundary       |  | Camping - NO FEE      |
|  | State Recreation Area Boundary |  | Camping - FEE CHARGED |





**1**

**PETER McINTYRE**

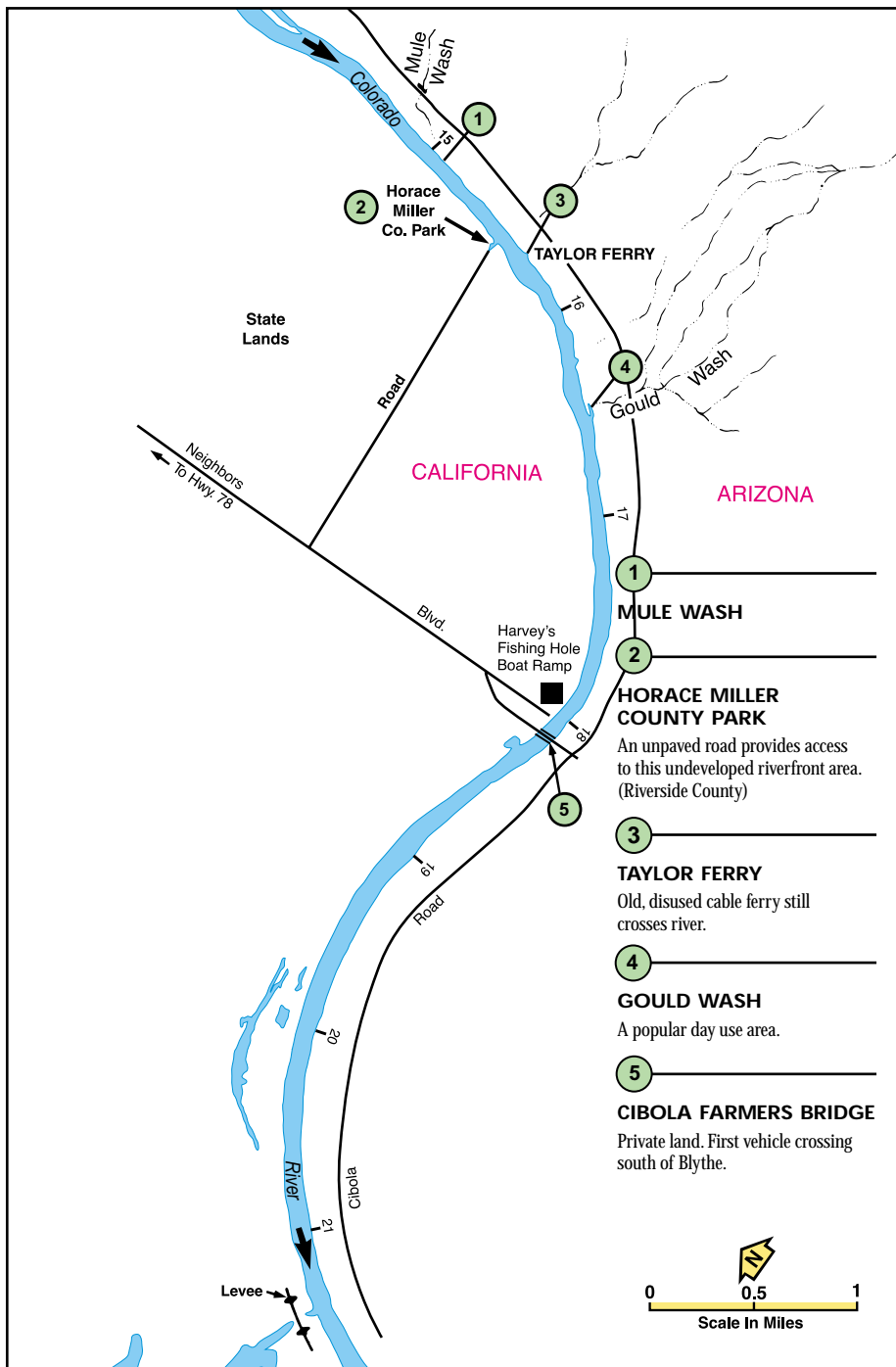


A well-developed site with potable water, supplies and canoe rental available. (Riverside County)

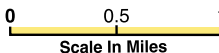
**2**

**MOHAVE WASH**

The three jetties at this mouth provide campsites. A national historic landmark, the Ripley intaglios are large drawings made by aboriginal inhabitants. They are located on the bluffs.

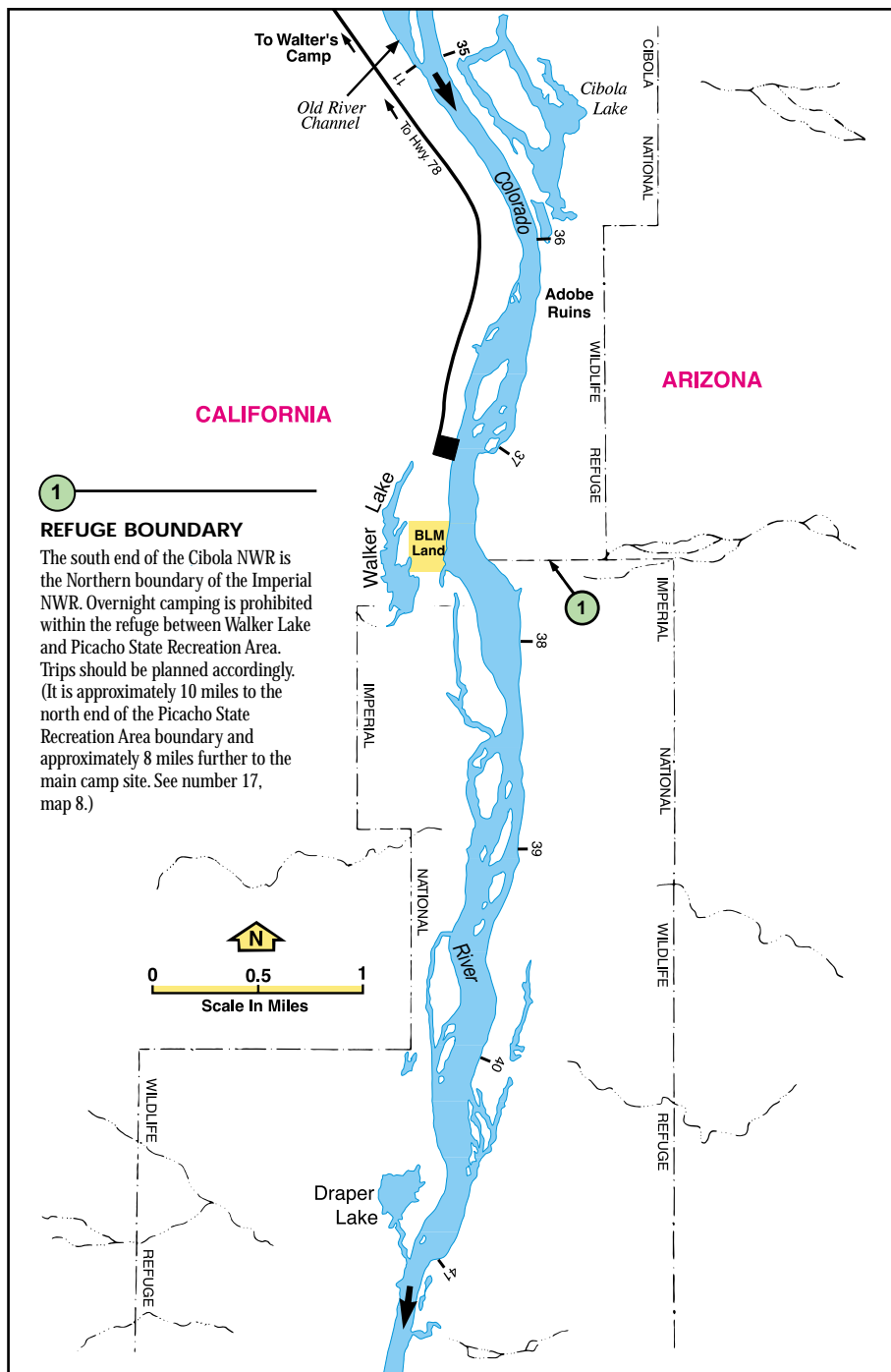


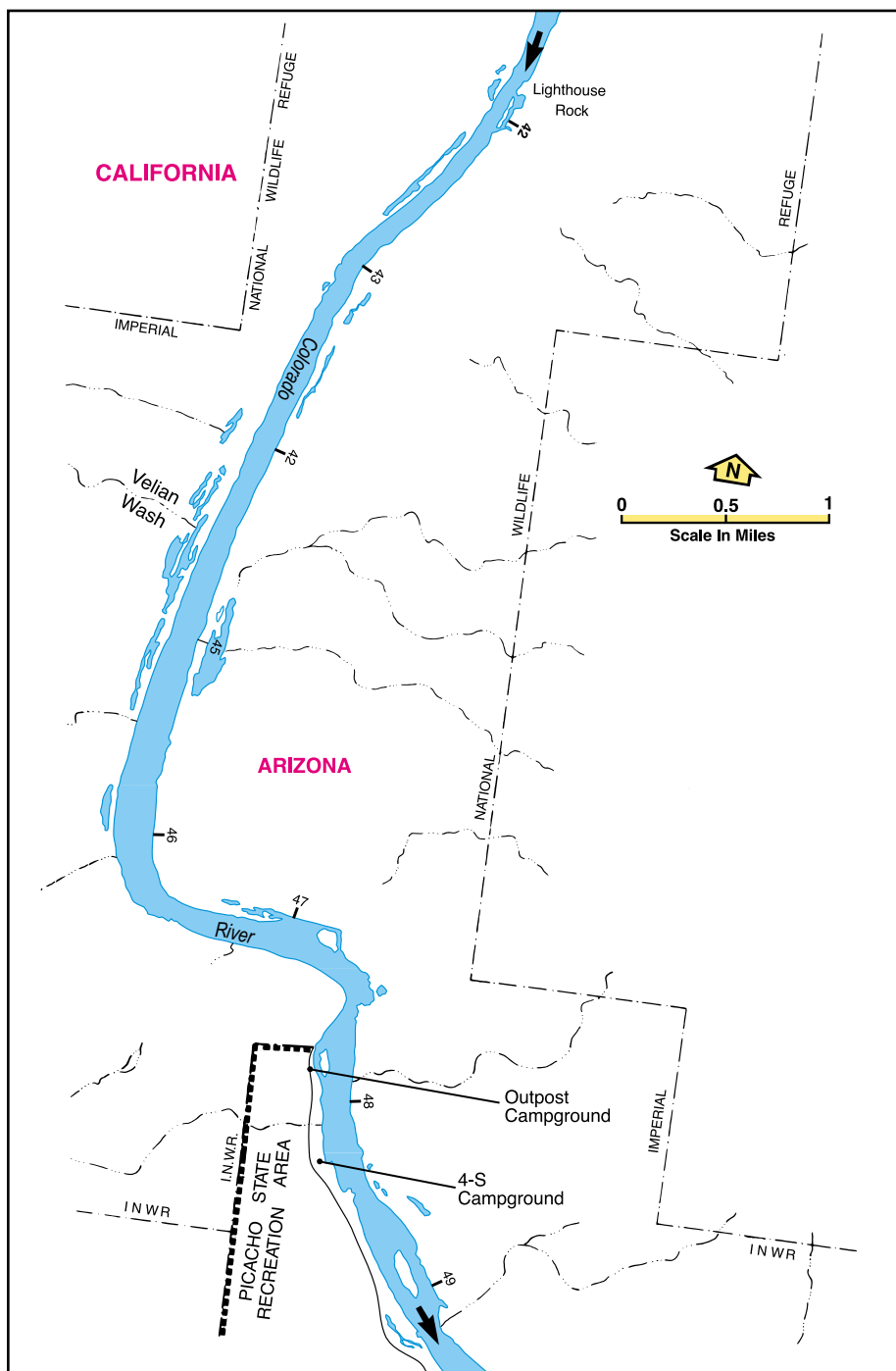


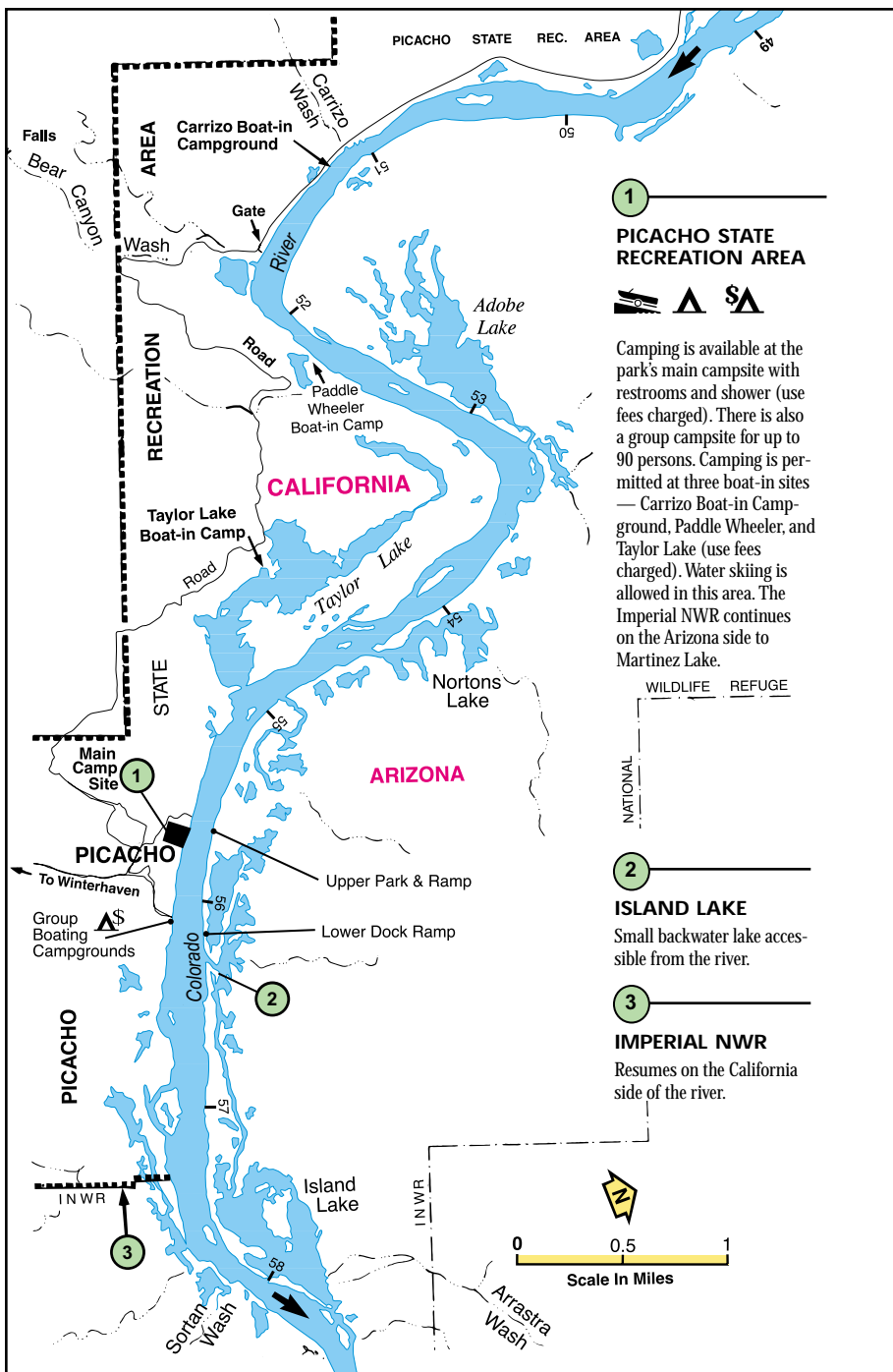


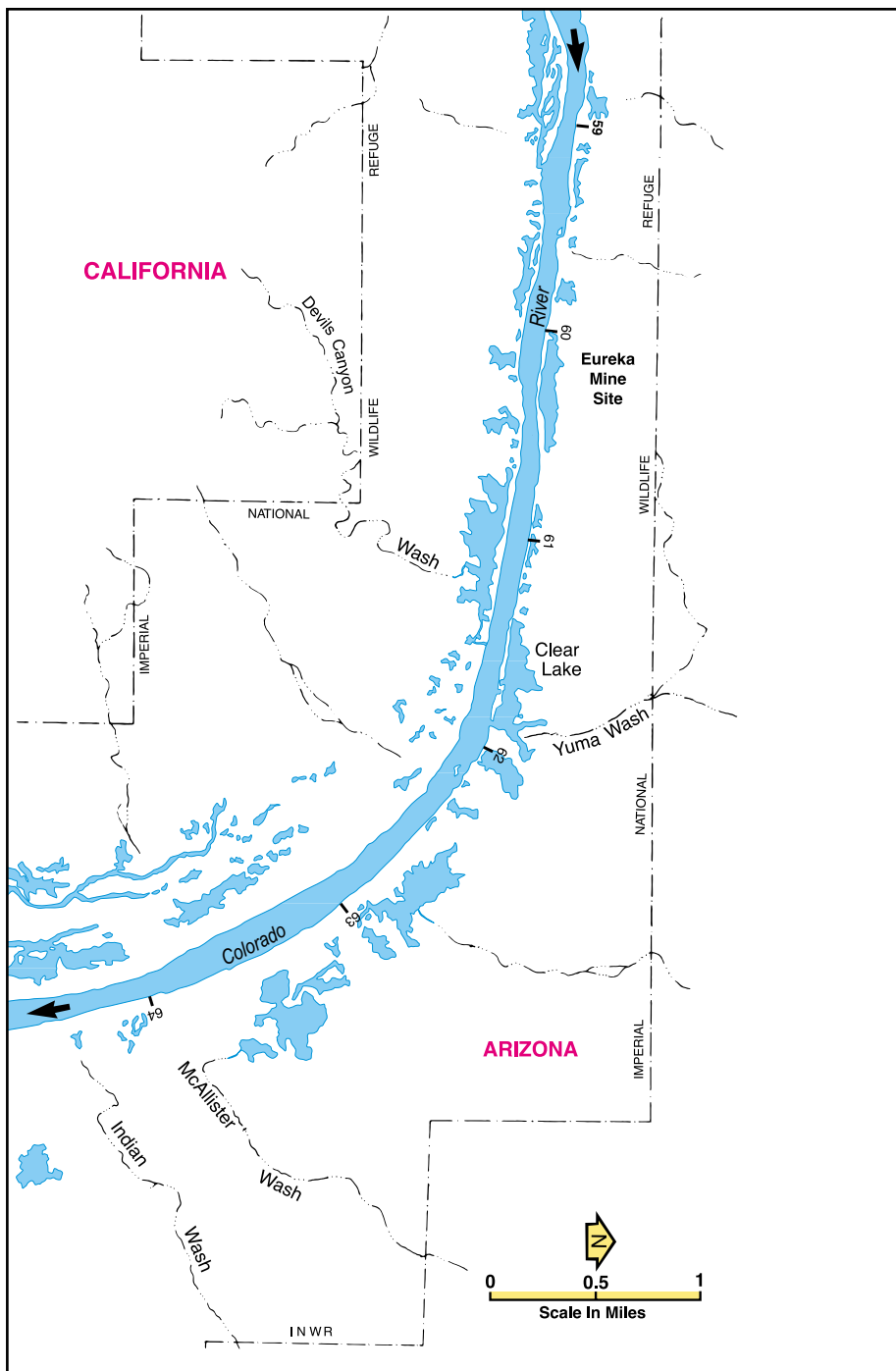


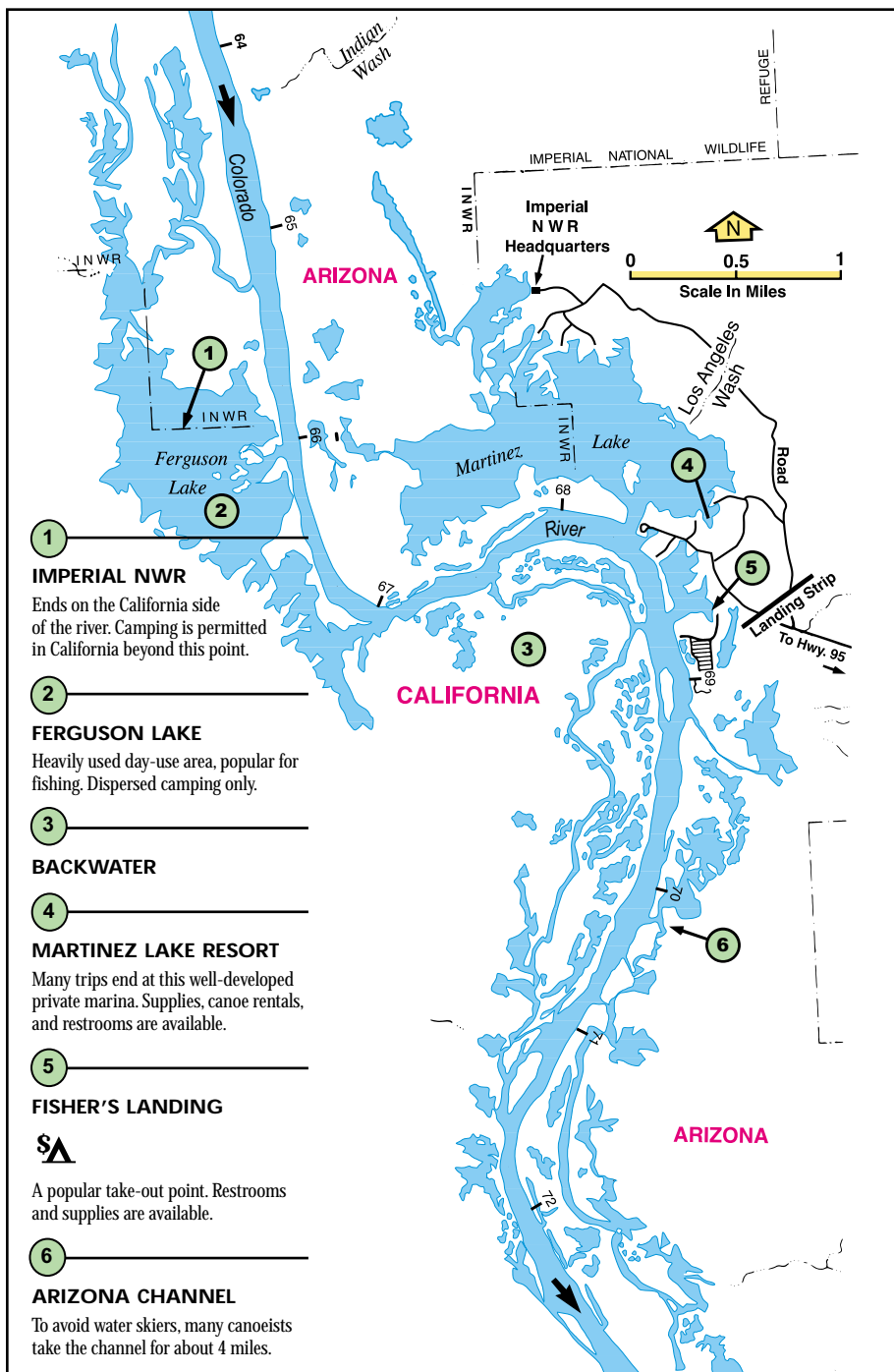


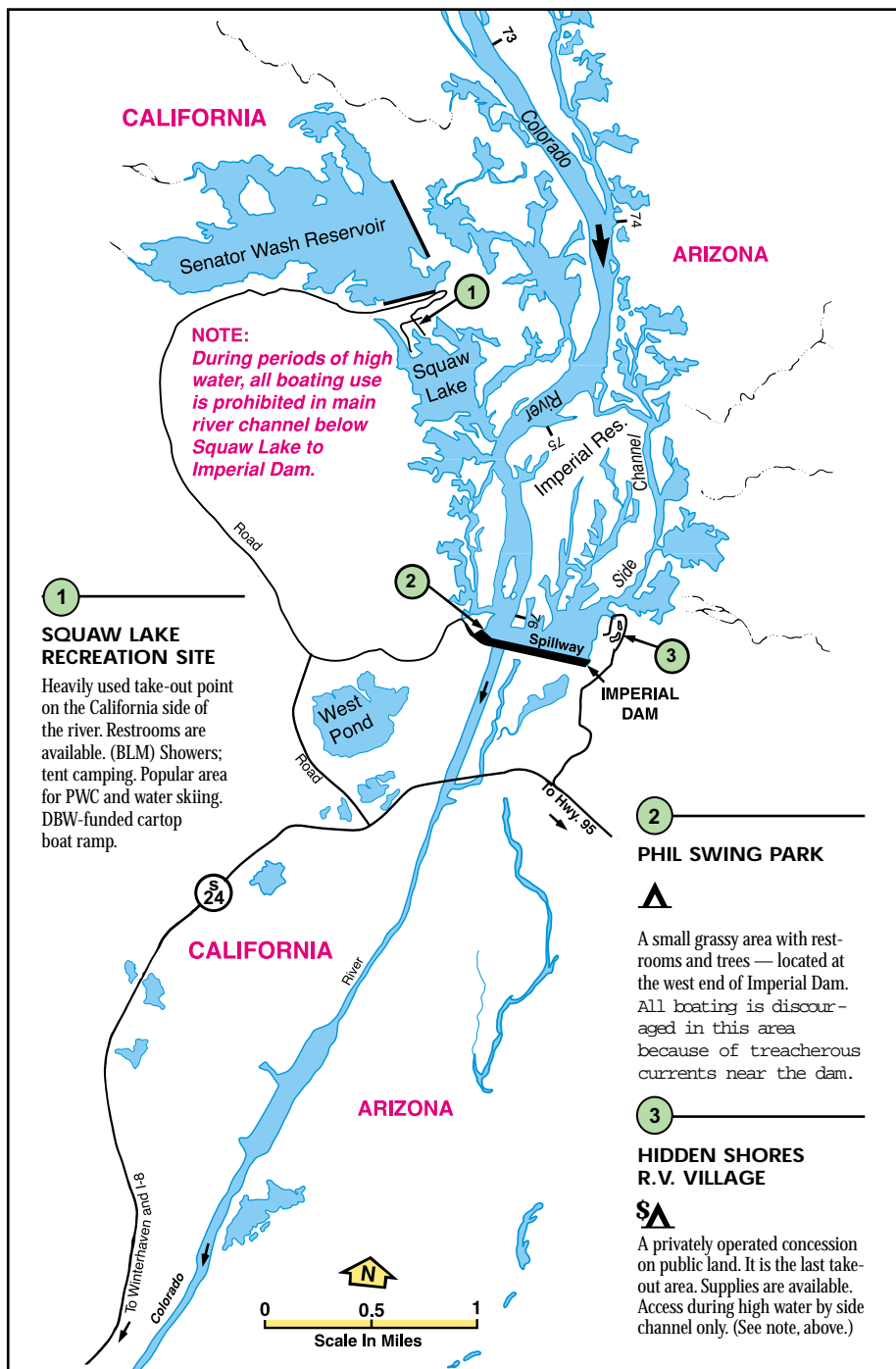














**CALIFORNIA****Department of Fish & Game**

14700 South Broadway  
Blythe, CA 92225  
(760) 922-6508

**Department of Parks & Recreation**

Picacho State Recreation Area

Field Office  
P.O. Box 848  
Winterhaven, CA 92283  
(760) 996-2963

Headquarters  
(760) 393-3059

**Imperial County Sheriff's Substation**

513 2nd Ave.  
Winterhaven, CA 92283  
(760) 572-0229

**Parks Department  
County of Riverside**

39000 Main St.  
Riverside, CA 92522  
(909) 826-2000

**Riverside Sheriff's Substation Blythe**

Patrol Boat  
260 N. Spring St.  
Blythe, CA 92225  
(760) 921-7900

**ARIZONA****Game & Fish Department**

9140 E. 28th St.  
Yuma AZ, 85365  
(928) 342-0091

**La Paz County Sheriff's Office**

P.O. Box BF  
Parker AZ, 85344  
(928) 669-2281

**Yuma County Sheriff's Office**

41 S. Third Ave.  
Yuma AZ, 85364  
(928) 783-4427

**FEDERAL AGENCIES****Bureau of Land Management**

Yuma Field Office  
2555 Gila Ridge Rd.  
Yuma, AZ 85365  
(928) 317-3200

**Bureau of Reclamation**

Lower Colorado Regional Office  
P.O. Box 427  
Boulder City, NV 89005  
(702) 293-8557

**Bureau of Reclamation**

Yuma Area Office  
7301 Calle Agua Salada  
Yuma, AZ 85364  
(928) 343-8133

**Fish & Wildlife Service****Imperial National Wildlife Refuge**

P.O. Box 72217  
Martinez Lake, AZ 85365  
(928) 783-3371

**PRIVATE****Fisher's Landing**

Star Route 4, Box 45  
Yuma, AZ 85365  
(928) 782-7049

**Hidden Shores R.V. Park**

Star Route 4, Box 40  
Yuma, AZ 85365  
(928) 783-1448

**Martinez Lake Marina**

Star Route 4, Box 41  
Martinez Lake, AZ 85365  
(928) 783-9589

**McIntyre Park**

8750 East 26th Ave.  
Blythe, CA 92225  
(760) 922-8205

**Riviera-Blythe Marina**

14100 Riviera Dr.  
Blythe, CA 92225  
(760) 922-5350

**Walter's Camp**

P.O. Box 31  
Palo Verde, CA 92266  
(760) 854-3322

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2000 Evergreen Street,  
Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA  
95815-3888  
(916) 263-1331  
[www.dbw.ca.gov](http://www.dbw.ca.gov)

**State of California  
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**Gray Davis,**  
Governor,  
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